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DE RUEHBHD #0204 2400206
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4628
INFO RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 2073

UNCLAS BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN 000204

SIPDIS

STATE PASS FOR EAP/MTS/COPPOLAMG, EEB/TPP/IPE/URBANJ
STATE PASS USTR/EHLERSK
STATE PASS FOR USPTO
BANGKOK FOR FCS/NESSJ

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KIPR](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [USTR](#) [BX](#)

SUBJECT: WIPPING OUT MUSIC PIRACY IN BRUNEI

SUMMARY

[¶1.](#) (SBU) Following in the footsteps of Microsoft, Recording Industry Malaysia (RIM) recently announced their permanent presence in Brunei. They addressed the lack of right holder's physical presence often cited by the Government of Brunei (GOB) as a deterrent in their efforts to put an end to rampant optical media piracy in Brunei. Following months of negotiations and cooperation with the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC) and the Royal Brunei Police Force, RIM held a press conference where they announced their presence and intention; to eradicate up to 90% of music piracy in Brunei in the next 3 months, with the support of the two GOB agencies. End Summary

RIM BLAZES INTO BRUNEI

[¶2.](#) (SBU) During the press conference, RIM's NK Tan informed the media, RIM is here to stay. Their permanent officers will visit music pirate outlets and lodge police reports every day for infringed goods. Tan stated despite written notifications of infringement to vendors in November 2008, only 10% of the vendors had complied six months later. Tan stated RIM's permanent presence is an indication of their commitment to fight music piracy together with the GOB. Tan stated RIM identified several foreign (and one local) syndicates operating illegal copying businesses. Information on the pirates was then handed over via sealed envelope marked 'Brunei Pirates' to a representative of the AGC. Press reporters were later led to a nearby store by Tan to highlight the extent of music piracy in the country. A raid was also carried out by the Police and details are forthcoming from the appropriate Police officials.

COMMENT

[¶3.](#) (SBU) The press conference was well covered by all media present including national news on radio and television. Subsequent public opinions published in the papers indicated most would buy original products 'if it's worth it.' A local entertainer supported the move, recognizing the importance of IPR for local performers. The online community posted mixed reactions. Less than half of bloggers supported original products, whereas others see the presence of RIM as interference in Brunei by a Malaysian organization. Comments were also made on whether the pirated goods would resurface after this publicity blitz. (Note: In the past, shelves of pirated CDs were cleared in advance of raids due to information leakages, only to reappear a few days later. End note) Post Commercial Assistant and other Embassy Staff noted pirated music CDs were absent in several stores in the vicinity of the capital within hours of the press conference. Several days later, the same stores did not have new original music CDs on sale, indicating they are possibly adopting a wait and see attitude, apparently unwilling to purchase products from RIM. Vendors appeared reluctant to work with RIM due

to pricing, perceiving RIM's comeback as their chance to recover lost revenue from Brunei in the past decade.

TODD